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SOURCE Narodna VoyskaISSUES NEW ARMY MANUAL

Major Nikolov

The new manual issued for the Bulgarian National Army does not differ radically from the one in use up to now. Nevertheless, there are some differences and innovations.

In extended-order drill and drill without arms (Chapter 2), in the commands "Lie down," "Get up," and those relating to running and jumping (Chapter 5), during individual training it is not necessary to preface the command by "Private," as has been the case until now. Only when it is desired to halt a movement does the officer issue the preparatory command: "Private X, halt."

No command is required for taking off or putting on the cap.

Bayonet practice has been made part of the physical training program, as a phase of hand-to-hand combat training. The general command "Prepare for battle" is now given instead of "Fix bayonets," as used up to now.

Various types of practice with the rifle (or carbine) will be conducted during the physical training periods.

The rifle, carbine, and light machine gun are grasped at the muzzle in the position of attention. Other positions are "Sling arms" and "Shoulder arms."

Chapter 4 is devoted to military courtesy. In contrast with previous practice, drivers of military and transport vehicles, motorcycles, or carts and wagons, as well as mounted soldiers, need not salute while driving or riding.

A new salute is prescribed, to be given only by soldiers on guard duty.

Chapter 6 refers to squad drill. It is no longer necessary for the soldiers to say "Yes, comrade" after the command "Squad dismissed" is given. At the command "Squad, dress" it is no longer necessary to place the left hand at one's side. The command to dress is executed either to the right or to the left. Each soldier must be able to see the chest of the fourth man from him, and be close enough to the next soldier to feel slight contact with him at his side. The new command for placing the weapon on the ground is "Squad, weapons down."

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The new manual does not require knapsacks to be stacked. Drill is conducted without knapsacks; when the soldier carries a knapsack, he disposes of it as may appear best.

The command for the squad to salute [in marching formation ?] is "Squad, attention, right dress" (also left dress, center dress). The command was formerly "Attention, eyes right" (or left).

The command to form skirmishers is a new one also; it is "Squad, to [name of objective], squad leader [name of leader], forward."

A change has been made in the command to attack. It is now "Squad, prepare for the attack," rather than "Prepare for the assault." The term "assault" is no longer used in military terminology.

Chapter 7 applies to platoon drill. The platoon, as well as the squad and company, are moved with the command "Right (left) shoulder forward" [sic]. Up to now the command had been "To the right (left), march."

The command to form skirmishers is the same for the platoon as was indicated above for the squad.

There are no fundamental changes in Chapters 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14, except for some changes in terminology such as "avtomobil" for automobile, "minomet" for mortar, and "batal'on" for battalion.

Chapter 15 indicates some changes in commands. One of the most important of these is for saluting the flag. Instead of "Rally round the flag and salute" the command is now "Attention, under the flag and salute."

A considerable number of changes are listed in the appendixes. One of the major innovations concerns the holding of the sword. The hilt is turned backward and not forward, as had been the case until now. In other words, the sword is held exactly in the opposite manner from that practiced previously.

The new manual embodies the rich experience of the Soviet Army.

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